

Senate Concurrent Resolution

No. 15

Introduced by Senator Evans

*(Coauthors: Senators Corbett, Dutton, Hancock, Kehoe, La Malfa,
Lieu, Pavley, Steinberg, and Wolk)*

*(Coauthors: Assembly Members Block, Blumenfield, Cook, Dickinson,
Fletcher, Gordon, Hall, Huffman, Ma, Monning, and Portantino)*

February 18, 2011

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 15—Relative to Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Denim Day California.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 15, as amended, Evans. Sexual Assault Awareness Month: Denim Day California.

This measure would resolve that the month of April be designated as Sexual Assault Awareness Month, would recognize April 27, 2011, as Denim Day California, and would encourage everyone to wear jeans on that day to help communicate the message that there is no excuse for, and never an invitation to, rape or sexual assault.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, In 2009, California rape crisis centers provided
2 direct crisis intervention services to 28,993 individuals and
3 provided community education services for more than 150,000
4 people; and

5 WHEREAS, The American Medical Association has stated that
6 a “woman is raped every 46 seconds in the United States” and that
7 sexual assault is a “silent epidemic”; and

1 WHEREAS, Women, children, and men are all victims of sexual
2 assault and it is estimated that one in three women, one in four
3 girls, one in six boys, and one in 11 men will be victims at least
4 once in their lifetimes; and

5 WHEREAS, Rape and sexual assault impacts women, children,
6 and men of all racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds; and

7 WHEREAS, Women, children, and men suffer multiple types
8 of sexual violence including acquaintance rape, stranger rape,
9 sexual assault by an intimate partner, gang rape, incest, serial rape,
10 ritual abuse, sexual harassment, child sexual molestation,
11 prostitution, pornography, and stalking; and

12 WHEREAS, In addition to the immediate physical and emotional
13 costs, sexual assault may also have associated severe and
14 long-lasting consequences of post-traumatic stress disorder,
15 substance abuse, major depression, homelessness, eating disorders,
16 and suicide; and

17 WHEREAS, The federal Centers for Disease Control and
18 Prevention have identified sexual assault as a significant, costly,
19 and preventable health issue; and

20 WHEREAS, A coalition of rape crisis centers and their allies,
21 known as the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault, has
22 emerged to directly confront this crisis with the cooperation of law
23 enforcement agencies, churches, health care providers, and other
24 helping professionals from California's diverse communities; and

25 WHEREAS, It is our responsibility to support rape survivors
26 by treating them with dignity, compassion, and respect; and

27 WHEREAS, It is important to recognize the compassion and
28 dedication of the individuals involved in this effort, applaud their
29 commitment, and increase public understanding of this significant
30 problem; and

31 WHEREAS, It is important to recognize the strength, courage,
32 and challenges of the victims and survivors of sexual assault and
33 their families and friends as they struggle to cope with the reality
34 of sexual assault; and

35 WHEREAS, It is important to recognize that not all victims of
36 sexual assault survive, either at the time of the assault or later, due
37 to the horrific long-term trauma that sexual assault often inflicts
38 upon victims; and

39 WHEREAS, There are rape prevention and education efforts
40 underway throughout California to challenge the societal myths

1 and behaviors that perpetuate rape and to engage communities in
2 a common goal of ending sexual assault; and

3 WHEREAS, It is crucially important to hold perpetrators
4 responsible for sexual attacks, and to prevent sexual violence at
5 every opportunity; and

6 WHEREAS, In 1998, the Italian Supreme Court overturned the
7 conviction of a man who sexually assaulted an ~~18-year-old~~
8 *18-year-old* woman after the court determined that, “because the
9 victim wore very, very tight jeans, she had to help him remove
10 them, and by removing the jeans it was no longer rape but
11 consensual sex”; and

12 WHEREAS, Enraged by the court decision, within a matter of
13 hours the women in the Italian Parliament launched into immediate
14 action and protested by wearing jeans to work; and

15 WHEREAS, Nations and states throughout the world have
16 followed the lead of the Italian Parliament by designating their
17 own “Denim Day” to raise public awareness about rape and sexual
18 assault; and

19 WHEREAS, Harmful attitudes about rape and sexual assault
20 allow these crimes to persist and allow survivors to be revictimized
21 through victim-blaming attitudes and unresponsive government
22 systems; and

23 WHEREAS, California is a national leader within the judicial,
24 criminal justice, medical, rape crisis, and health communities in
25 promoting victim-centered approaches to victims of crimes; now,
26 therefore, be it

27 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
28 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature designates the month of
29 April 2011 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month; and be it further

30 *Resolved*, That the Legislature recognizes April 27, 2011, as
31 “Denim Day California” and encourages everyone to wear jeans
32 on that day to help communicate the message that there is no
33 excuse for, and never an invitation to, rape and sexual assault.
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36 **CORRECTIONS:**

37 **Text—Page 3.**
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